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ADP013397

TITLE: The New Integrated Rescue System in the Czech Republic

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This paper is part of the following report:

TITLE: Chemical and Biological Medical Treatment Symposium - Industry
II World Congress on Chemical and Biological Terrorism

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The following component part numbers comprise the compilation report:

ADP013371 thru ADP013468

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27. THE NEW INTEGRATED RESCUE SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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A COMMON INTRODUCTION

Use of sarin in the overcrowded metro of Tokyo in 1995 was a shocking and warning case for the whole wide world. The case was extremely alarming because it took place in democratic, well-off and socially stable society.

New technologies, especially in the field of genetic engineering, biological manipulation, but also chemical industry create premises for the results of scientific investigations to be used in ill manner for terrorist targets. Unfortunately, availability of know-how, own relatively simple and cheap production, use of basically simple methods of application have created such a situation that the ill use of chemical warfare agents (VX agent, soman, sarin, tabun, mustard gas, lewisite, phosgene, etc.) biological warfare agents (bacteria, viruses, rickettsia, toxins, etc.) can be expected anywhere and at any time all over the world for different reasons. Another possibility is the industrial toxic substances. A large series of industrial toxic substances - such as chlorine, ammonia, hydrocyanic acid, phosgene, formaldehyde and many others belong to widely spread substances as for both the number and contents.

Terrorists can and certainly will struggle to gain weapons of mass destruction or their effective components, such as toxic agents, toxins, bacteria and germs. These materials can easily be „home made“ since technical and technological information necessary for synthesis of the most toxic agents (chemical nerve-paralytic warfare agents: VX agent, soman, sarin, tabun) is commonly available in special or patent literature. Particularly this refers to the new type of binary chemical ammunition. For example at least five methods of preparation is commonly known for toxic agent called sarin.

Besides, the danger, numerous security experts have said, is that impoverished weapon experts from the former Soviet Union could be tempted to sell their knowledge to rogue nations. But country seeking weapon knowledge may cloak their goal with legitimate jobs. Scientists have been offered university positions to teach about technologies that have both benign and malignant uses.

U.S. government assessments frequently cite the spread of chemical and biological weapons as one of the greatest security threats to the country and world, there is a serious gap between the threat and resources devoted to mitigating them. Moreover, there is no doubt about the reason for the considerable increase in smuggling radioactive materials from East to West. We should reckon with the fact that the most militant of the extremist groups are struggling for nuclear weapons. The „emigration of brains“ and „purchase of necessary knowledge“ from the former secret nuclear centers in the U.S.S.R. could help it. Unfortunately we cannot eliminate the work of nuclear experts for militant terrorist groups and organizations. In accordance with STARTs agreements a great number of Russian nuclear explosives is to be processed into nuclear fuel for nuclear power plants. This creates some questions, for example: Is Russia able to secure these explosives?

Another possibility is the industrial toxic substances. A large series of industrial toxic substances belong among widely spread substances as for both the number and contents are documented by, for instance, Civil Protection in the Czech Republic that specifies them in the

following order (from the point of view of their amount and toxicity): chlorine, ammonia, hydrocyanic acid, phosgene, and formaldehyde. Mainly ammonia and chlorine are produced, used and transported in huge volumes and can be met in both railway transport and industrial installations.

It is easy to imagine a situation when the armed terrorists get possession of a chlorine tank, for instance, and will menace with its opening and release of its toxic contents. Analogously it could happen that a group of armed terrorist will seize some stationary source – of a chlorine container in a water-treatment plant and will also menace with its drainage out. And, if the worst comes to the worst, they could use a toxic substance against unprotected civilian population – without any warning at all.

THE SITUATION AFTER VELVET REVOLUTION

In the Czech Republic, after 1989, the problems of terrorism are dealt with the Czech Republic's Police in cooperation with the intelligence services. Many of terrorist organizations have international nature that requires a very closed and effective international cooperation. Territory of the Czech Republic has served and it will continue to do it as a transit country for the move of different terrorist groups or individuals or – as the case may be – as a transit country for some kinds of goods whose sale can often finance the terrorist groups' activities.

In the Czech Republic, soon after 1990, special counter-terrorist units have been established. Up to now, nevertheless, these units have not been equipped with efficient means of high quality that could be used for fighting the nuclear, chemical, and biological terrorism such as, for instance: special monitoring instruments, means of individual protection, etc. Related to that is, naturally, so far missing efficient and purposeful training of high quality.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW INTEGRATED RESCUE SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

There is totally new situation on the area of crisis management and emergency planning in the Czech Republic. The series of significant acts that represent the basic presumption for building up the new integrated system were declared in the Czech Republic in August 2000. In question are the following new and important Acts:

*The Act on the Czech Republic's Fire Fighting Rescue Corps (No. 238),
The Act for the Integrated Rescue System (No. 239),
The Act on the Crisis Management, so called Crisis Act (No. 240),
The Act concerning Economical Measures for Crisis Statutes (No. 241),
The Act on General Fire Fighting has been amended significantly (No. 237).*

These important Acts then have created a complex and full necessary legal environment for managing all main crisis situations promptly and in qualified manner. Mainly the Act about the Integrated Rescue System and its executing decrees are the basic tools and means for quick, effective, professional, and coordinated interventions by all rescue and emergency components, both state and private ones of that essential rescue system. These above mentioned Acts entered into the force from January 1, 2001. The created system will then also involve the indispensable answers to the new and very dangerous trends in terrorism such as nuclear, chemical, and biological branches of terrorism, including terrorism by industrial toxic chemicals. The created integrated rescue system must be furnished with such an amount of the means, technology, and material that it may cover the needs of all components of the process:

*the quick and reliable detection and monitoring hazardous agents,
the fast and direct warning,
the protection of personnel of rescue components, forces and units,
the first aid and the ensuring medical care for affected people,
the fast and completed decontamination of persons, personnel, techniques and areas,
reporting system.*

In the conditions of the Czech Republic, the complex solution of this problem consists, in principle, in concluding the establishment of so called "Integrated Rescue System" that involves, as the main and first-order components, the police, rescue fire brigades and fast rescue medical service that start the action practically immediately. Then the second-echelon components – such as the selected components of Armed Forces and many others are activated.

This naturally means to conclude the establishment of integrated rescue system in the Czech Republic also from the point of view of the possible terrorist attack including the ill use of industrial toxic substances against civilian population or even the NBC weapons. Implementation of multidisciplinary teams seems to be the indispensable first step. It is also necessary to harmonize and complete the technical outfit, to adapt the structure of organization in the integrated rescue system.

For the cases of terrorism it would be appropriate for the participating components to elaborate a unified information as a manual that ought to contain basic information concerning the "classic terrorism", but also the terrorism combined with the use of industrial toxic substances or, as case may be, NBC weapons. Further on operating procedures / methodology of interventions would be developed for solving the various cases as models for each case apart.

CONCLUSION

At present time, it is, unfortunately, indispensable to count with the possibility that the terrorist might be armed with even very modern weapons that, in the past, could be found exclusively in army stores or police units, in the national guards and other official state armed forces. These are, for instance, missiles, anti-tank weapons, mortars etc. It is just a question of time when the mass destruction weapons or the destructive components of chemical and biological weapons will enlarge or will become the main means of the terrorists' armament. It is also imminent the possibility that these weapons - threat of their use - will practice extortion with the state bodies for which it will be very difficult to manage such situations.

From the above statement it can be deduced that the problems of nuclear, chemical, and biological terrorism should be investigated on the basis of scientific methods and it should utilize the international cooperation as much as possible.

SUMMARY

A short common introduction of the area of chemical, biological and nuclear terrorism, including toxic industrial substances. The situation in the country after so-called Velvet Revolution on the area of counter-terrorism preparedness. The establishment of the new integrated rescue system in the Czech Republic including a couple of new acts concerning crisis management and emergency planning. A common requirements for the creation of the new system. The main and first-order components, rescue and emergency units.

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KEYWORDS

Crisis Management; Integrated Rescue System; Chemical Warfare Agents; Biological Warfare Agents; Industrial Toxic Substances; Rescue and Emergency Forces, Units and Components